

## AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF WILLIAM McDONALD

The following was originally handwritten in a journal by William McDonald as he recalled some of the events of his life. It is reproduced verbatim, exactly as it was in the original journal.

Although he had little opportunity to attend school, William McDonald was an intelligent and gifted man. Using only crude tools, he and his brother John were able to engineer two ditches to carry water from the Provo River so accurately that they are used today with little change. He was the first treasurer of Wasatch County and served as a selectman for several years. He loved his family and wanted a good record kept of them. It was his desire to preserve a record of the following events for his posterity.

### A PORSHION OF THE HISTORY OF MY LIFE

I was born in Craford's Burn, County Down, Ireland in the year 1834, November 16th. My Father's name was James McDonald. Mother's name Sarah Ferguson McDonald. They joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in 1841. I was Baptised when 8 years of age. Elder David Wilken organized a Branch in Ireland & meetings were held in our house which was headquarters for the Branch it being about the first introduction of Mormonism in that country. Persecution at first was very bad. Father sold his home there in 1842 and started with his family together with the saints for Navo. Sailed from Liverpool England landed in New Orleans, America. The Prophet Joseph Smith had a steam boat there to take the passengers of the ship up the Mississippi River to Navo and as the boat belonged to the Prophet the whole ship's crew wanted to go on it and overloaded the steamer so it broke down very often. So we were six weeks making the trip which other steamers made in one week. People knew the boat belonged to the Prophet Joseph and that we were Mormons and they came on board when we were getting repairs and abused us with all the mean things they could think of calling us; Old Jos Rats and set the boat on fire. It was steel and no damage done. We were met by the Prophet and he blessed the people and spoke words of incouragement to them. My father was entrusted with sum money sent to the Prophet by our branch and in presenting it to him got personally acquainted with him.

We lived in Navo 2 years & was driven out with the rest of the saints after the Prophet and Paterk was martyred. We crossed the Mississippi River on a flat boat among a lot of cattle. Was taken from there by a man by the name of George Hicks to a little town called Bonepart about 30 miles from Navo. We stayed there 3 years and worked hard and made a fitout to come to Salt Lake Valley together with the leaders of the church which had located there for the winter at Council Bluffs near Kanesville a gathering place before starting across the plains. Got there early in the fall and cut hay to winter our stock. We lived that winter in an old log cabin. After getting located for the winter my father & my brother John 2 years older than me and myself fixed up one of our wagons with one yoke of oxen and went down into Misore among the worst enemies of our church to try to get work with a man that owed money slaves to break hemp among the negroes. He gave us a log cabin to camp in close to the negro quarters and as it was our first experience with them people we enjoyed their performance very much. Didn't matter how hard they worked they always got together in the evening with their women and danced and played the Banjo & the way they handled that Banjo was new & entertaining to us. They would sing & dance & jump and play the Gong.

by knocking it on their head & on Their Knees & Kick it With Their feet. One Night Father Jumped up and Danced & as He Was a good Step Dancer the Negros Hat Him Dance Every Night. He sung & Danced Some Comic Irish Songs and Had the Negros very Much interested in Him and Som of the girls told their Mistres about Him Singing With them and How they Engoyed it. So the Mistres sent one of the Servants to invite us to come and Spend the Evenin With them and Bring the Boys with Him. So Father Excepted the invitastrion So We Put on Sum Clean Clothing and Went Over. Was Met at the Door by a Servant Whitch invited us to Com into the Siting Room and she wood inform the Mistress and She came in and invited us into the Parlor and treated us so plesently that We felt well in Her Company. She Said Mr. McDonald our Servants are very Mutch interested with your singing and Dansing in their quarters. We Have Good Music Here and hope you Will Be Pleased to Dance and Sing a little for us. Father Said My Dear Lady My Humble Efferts to amuse your Servants in their quarters Might be Entirley out of Place in your Parlor. Her Husband Entered the Parlor Whitch Stopped further Conversation at theat time. The Master seemed Pleased to Meet Us and Spoke on the Same Subject His Wife Hat Enterduced and Said that the Darkes Delighted With your Singing and Dancing and we Would like to Have you treat us With the Same Performance. They Had a very Fine instrement and the Lady Played and Sang and Treated us as old Friends of Long Aqaintance. Father Was Pleased With Their good treatment and He Danced and Sang Sum of His Irish Comic Songs Whitch Was New to them and We had a very Plesent eveining.

We Worked for that Man about a Month and took Most of our Pay in Pervishions: Flower, Backen, Corn, Dried Apples, Jugar and after Makeing up our Pay in Sutch things He took us into His Smoke House and Gave us a Lot of fine Smoked Hams and Side Meat, in fact Finished Loading our Wagon With good things. Now Me He says i Want a Comadation of you. I Want you to Leave that Boy With Me Pointing to Me. Father told Him He could Not do that. We Parted With Him as good Friends and Father thanked Him for His Kindness to us. That load of Pervishions lasted us acrost the plains & the Winter after we got into the valleys.

When We got Beck to camp We found Everything all Right. Jane & Eliza Were Young Women. My Sisters Had taken Good care of Everything. Mother Had been Sick in Bonepart For too years and Seemed to improve When camping out. The Doctor Said it was nervis Prostration and Said Madison would Do her No good But She Had to have som and to Please Her He Had to Perscribe Sumthing For Her to take, So He told Jame My Sister to get Sum Oack Bark & Make a Weak tea and tell Her that Was Wat i told you to give her. Jane waigheted on Mother and tended her like a Helpless Child for 2 years. in fact Jane Was a Mother to all of us Children and We Mostly dun as She directed us but Robert two years younger than Me gave Her sum Trubble Sumtimes.

The Next Thing to Do Was to Fit up the Wagons and Gether Withe the Company to orginize to Cross the Pleans. Camped at the gathering Place until We got 50 Wagons. That Was in the Spring of 1850. Us boys Engoyed The Wild Countrey and the Wild Game Whitch Were in abondance on the Pleans. the Buffilo Were So thick and Went in Sutch Large Hirds We had to Stop the Trein and Corell the Wagons untill Sum of the Large Hirds Pased. in traviling We Were Strung out on the trail Haf a Mile long. i Was 16 years old When We Crosed the Plains and Was Numbered With the Gard and took My turn With the older Men. I rember We Had to call the Our and all is Well Every our. When it came to that part of it i think there never Was a young Rouster larning to Crow Felt Prouder than i Did. That was my First Military Servis Whitch Was Continued Mor or less in Settling this Country utah and sorounding Country.

We Had No Trouble With Indians Crossing the Plains But We Kept ourselves in Bedinense Coralled the Wagons Every Night and Kept our powder drie. Prepared for the Worst But all Went Well untill the Colary Broke out in Camp. that Proved to be verey Fatle. Every one that took it died.

My Father Helped to Buiry a Man one Morning and took Sick after the train Started and Died that Night. We Came to the Plat River that Day in the Afternoon and Part of the Train Had crossed the River. Father being very Bad We asked Him if We should Cross the River With Him. He Said yes So He died that Night on this Side of the Plat River. That Was the Gratest triel We ever Had in Our Family... So Sudent on the Dreary Plains of America and Burried without a coffin. But We Had Sum Large Boxis along Whiche We Broke up and Dug a Deep grave With a volt at the Bottom Large enouf for the Body and Covered it Securley With the lumber of Those Boxes Whitch We thought Would Prevent Wolves from Diging up the Body For we had Passed Sum graves that Had Been Buried in Hast that the Wolves Had Dug up.

When We had traveled about two thirds of the Way to Salt Lake our Cattle Had lost their shoes Sum and Began to get Lame and the Captain called a Halt to Rest the Teams and Shoe those that were lame and tender futed. Stopped at a Place they called Deer Creek. Stayed there Two Weeks. Had plenty of good Meat to Eat While there i Remember one Night one of the Hunters Dident com in untill about Midnight. His Name was Peter Shirts. The people thought He had got lost or Was Taken by indians. We Built Fires all around Camp and Fired guns and about Midnight Peter Came in With the Hind quarters of a large Deer on His Shoulders.

We got to Salt Lake about the last of September. Stayed There a Month. Cut Sum Hay West of Salt Lake Close to the lake. But We were advised by Sum Friends that came acrost the Pleans with us to come out to Lehi in Utah Valley and our Cattle Would Winter out on the Range and do well. So We Moved and located about 3 miles North of Lehi With 5 or 6 Families Where Now Stands the city of Alpine. We Sowed Sum fall Wheat there and our Cattle Dun fine and We Had plenty of good wood to burn. Our Sister Eliza got Married that Winter to William Clyde. That Was the First Marige in that Place. When the Spring of 1851 opened We Dident Like the Place. There Was No orgination at the time there and our Wheat didnt look very Well so My Brother John Went to Springvail and He liked that Place Mutch better there. Had a good Number of Families Wintered there. Had Built a Small Fort and Had laid out the City of Springvail. We took up a lot and camped there and Went to Work puting in a Crop on 20 acres of land West of Springvail.

In the Spring of 1852 We Put in another crop of Wheat Whitch Dident do as Well as the First. Seemed that the Water Brought up the Salarates and killed the Weat in Spots so Brother John stayed Home and tended the Crop and me and Robert Went Down to Salt Lake to trie to get Work for We Were Destute of clothing. We Were Strangers and Had no Means to get food or logins and We Were Sum Days Before We got Work and We got Most afull Hungry. So I said to Robert We Have to go into Sum of these Houses and ask for Sumthing to Eat. Robert Said that I would Have to Do the talking So We Went into the Next House We came to and told our Storey to a Nice Lady. She told us to Sit Down and She got us a good Meal and I tell you it tasted mighty good to us. She treated us so nice that We Felt at Home and told her our History. She Said that Her Husband Had a Sawmill up in Mill Creek Canyon and She thought that He Would Hire us to Work in the Canyon. He came Home that night and He Hired us to Work in the Canyon. His name was Mr. Porter. We Worked there about a Month and would have Worked there all summer if it Hadent been for an Exident that Hapent to Robert. We

had 1 Yoke of Wild Steers. We Worked on a Cart Put one End of a Log on the Cart t'other End on the ground and i Had to Walk by the Steers Head to keep them in the trail. Robert got on the End of the Log Just over the Wheels. The Log Was a very Large one. He couldnt straddle it. Cart Ran over a Stump and threw Him right under His Shoulder. Broke His Coller Bone. We Had to Stop Work. Went Down into the Valley and found a Doctor. Cant Remember His Name. He Worked with the Wound for Sumtime. Said the Coller Bone was Broke and Pushed Down into the Shoulder Whitch He set and Raised it up all He could and Dun it up Nice. Gave Him a Nice Silk Hankerchief to Sling His arm in. i Told Him a little of our History and told Him We would Pay Him By giving Him an order on Mr. Porter the Man We Had Been Working for. He Said No Boys I Wont Charge you aneything. You are Welcom to my Servises. We thanked Him and Started Hom to Springvail on Fut. Got Home that Night verey late.

So in the years of 1852 and 3 there Was a large Emegration to Cal-iforny on account of the great Discovery of gold in that country. So Myself and My Brother Robert caught the gold fever Whitch Was Very Contagis at that time and We started in the Spring of 1853 for Caleforney the Southren Rout. After traviling about 250 Miles We came to the outside City of utah at that time called Coalvail, Now Sider (Cedar)City, Iron County. i Being acquainted with Som of the People in that Place went to See them & they Were so glad to see Me that they prevailed on Me to stop With them a While. And the Waker (Walker) indian War Broke out. Marshal Law Was Declared and i Was Presed into that. Served as a Minut Man in Cavildry one year untill Peace Was Decleared. i Helped to Fence the first Big Field in that locality. Raised one crop there of Wheat. Got Married to Seriah Shirts December 10th 1853. Daughter of Peter Shirts and Margret Cameron Shirts.

After i got Married My People in Springvail Wanted Me to Com Back to that Place. They Had got Me a Fine City lot joining George W. Clyde, My Brotherinlaw & Sister Jane. So I Moved Back to Springvail in the Fall of 1854. Worked in Hobil Creek Canyon all that Winter. Got out logs and Built a House & Made Other improvements on my lot.

In the Spring of 1855 i Rented a Farm of Robert Johnson My Neighbor and Put in 20 acres of Wheat. It came up Nice and was Looking fine and the Grasshoppers Hatched out And Swept the ground So Clean ther Wasent a a green thing left. That Stoped My farming that year and it seemed as though there Wood be a Famin for the Whole Country Was swept Clean of vegetation and We Ware over a thousand Miles from Where We could get aney Help. But i was fortunat for once. The crop that i Raised in Iron County was still there in Charge of a good Friend of Mine, Brother John Hamilton Senyer, So i Wrote to Him telling Him of My Misfortune losing my Crop and if He Hadent Disposed of it (My Wheat) to Hold it and I would com down and get it asking Him to write to Me as Soon as He got My letter Whitch He did telling Me it was Still there in the Bin i Made for it.

So i Hitched up my teem one yoke of Cattle and Wagon and went and got it and i tell you that Was a lonsum trip. 100 Miles between Filmore and Parawan. Camping 2 nights alone in that indian Country, Just after the Waker War. There Were Still Sum Roving Bands of indians Doing Mischief and We Hadent Mutch Confidence in them. But i got through all Right and My Friends Were very glad to see Me. i Stayed there about a Week. While there, there was an Exident Hapened to the Wife of James Farr, a young Man Starting to Make a Home in Seder City. The Wolves Were Noumers there at the time and they got into Mistres Farr Chicken Coop one Night. She Ran to see what Was the Matter and Just as She got into the Dorr a Wolf jumped by Her and Bit Her on the Shoulder casing a Slight Wound and in

a Shoret time she took Convulshions and Died. Her Father and Mother lived in Filmore so James Farr Came to He and Wanted to go in company Back With Me. i told Him i would be very glad of His Company. So i loaded My Wagon With all the Wheat that I thought it would carrey. My Oxen Was able to take More than My Wagon could Bear up and I had to load accordingly. When We got to Fillmore and the Father and Mother Met James Farr their Soninlaw there was Sutch Heartfelt Sorrow Expresed and Morning that I felt very sorrey for them. We stayed there 2 nights and James Farr Came with Me to Springvail. He had Relations in Provo.

i got a chance to Swap My Wheat at Filmore For Wheat in Springvail. Saved me Haling it over 100 miles. That Crop of Wheat Was a great Blessing to me. We had Plenty of Bread through that Famin and Had Sum to Spair. Sumtimes Hungry Children Would Cum and Beg for Bread and i felt Thankfull that We Had Sum to give them. Sum of them remembered that time after they Had Growed to Man and Woman Hood and came to us lafing and told us that When they got Right Hungery they always Came to our House and got Somthing to Eat. They Said they never could forget them Hard Times.

i Remember at that time We Ware Making a Ditch From Hobil Creek around the Bench into What Was then called union Field now Mapilton and there was a Man Working With me by the Name of Peter Bell and When Eating our Dinner i Notised that Peter Had Nothing to Eat But greens, i said to Him Wont you give me Sum of your greens and take Sum of My Bread. Why yes He Said Bread Will tast good to Me for We havent Had aney Bread for Sumtime.

We Met 30 years after that at a Blackhawk indain Warr Party Held at Spanish Fork. in talking over old times He spoke of the Dinner We Had on the Hobbelcreek Ditch. He said He Never Would forget That.

I Farmed 10 acres on the Bench a number of years. Went of to Provo Vally and Some one Homstead it after the government surveid the land and i never got aneything For it. Also 10 acers of What was Called the New Survay West of Springvail. Worked Water right to it from Spanish Fork. Lost that also.

in the year 1856 the people Wanted a Road up Provo Canyon into What Was then called Provo Valley so the Church issued What We called Mormon Scrip Suposed to Be good as Cash on the Co-op Store Salt Lake City and a Small Camp of us Springvail Folks Went and helped Mak a kind of Road up to the Valley. In 1857 We Heard of a Large army Starting From the States Being Sent By the Goverment as We supposed to Hob and Murder us as they had dun in Navo and We Ware Prepering For the Worst and all the people living in Salt Lake and North of there Moved South stoping For the Winter at Diferent Settlements in Utah County and South of there. i lived in Springvail at that time and My lot Was Full of Wagons camped. One old Cople by the Name of John Buler and Wife Wintered in My House. His Wife was Sick all Winter. Died Earley in the Spring.

These Ware Times of Great Excitement. All the able Bodied Men were called to arm themselves and March to aco (Echo) Canyon to Stop the invading army. i Was Sent with eleven others and one indain to Scout through the Country Between Springvail and Bridger Where the army Had Made a Halt. Was out 2 Weeks. Found a very rouf Country. Was satisfied the army Could not com through that fight. The army Wintred at Bridger and the Next Spring Peace was Decleared and the army Moved Down Aco Canyon into Ceder Valley and Built a Military Camp called Camp Floyd giving us Employment at High Wages Whitch We Needed as We were Destute of Clothing and almost Everthing. i Made 50 Dollars a Week .aking Dibies (Dobies) for them. There Was a number of Irish Soulders there and they found out that i Was an irishman and they came Down to the Doby yard and We had a good time. One of them Was Born within 8 Miles of Where i was.

They told me all about the army and Brought Me Nice Things to Eat From Camp and Helped Me Sum on the yard. i Worked there untill i made a good start for Farming and i Began to Want to Get Where i could Have a good farm and a good Range For Cattle and I got My Mind set on Provo Valley. So in the Summer of 1859 i Went up there and took up a Fine piece of land. Made My prshion of Fence for it in the big Field and Moved my Family up there in the Spring of 1860.

Built a House in the fort and Put in a crop of Wheat & oats in the Summer of 1860 Whitch Was Damaged With Frost Early in August. It Made a very Bad Black Flower Whitch We had to Live on for a year But that Didnt Discourage us. Our Stock Were looking Fine and we knew We could Make a good living Raisin Stock. There was an abundance of Hay of the verey Best quality But We Had to strugale With Maney Hardships and Triels Common in a new country For We Were cut off From other places Most of the time by snow in Winter and Water in Spring and Summer, No Roads or Bridges, No Markets For aneything and the Worst of it Was We had nothing to sell.

Our Third Crop of Grain Was prettey good & made good Flower But We got Shut in with Snow & Water and couldant get to Mill to get aney grinding. We used Coffe Mills & Made Homany until Finely there Was a Man by the Name of Wm Ranils a good old Yenkey contrived to fix a Small pair of Stones to a Horse Power of an old thrashing Meshen and i can Remember Waiting My turn to get Haf Bushel of Wheat Choped.